

# American Nephrology Nurses Association

Daily Capitol Hill Update – Monday, October 25, 2021

The following information comes from directly from news sources including Bloomberg Government, Kaiser Health News, and other news sources.

## Schedules: White House and Congress

### WHITE HOUSE

- Biden is scheduled to travel to East End Elementary School in North Plainfield, New Jersey as well as the Newark Liberty International Airport and a transit center to deliver remarks on his Build Back Better plan and the bipartisan infrastructure deal.
- At 5:30 p.m., Biden is scheduled to meet Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and the delegation of the Orthodox Christian Church at the White House.

### CONGRESS:

- The House will consider four measures under expedited procedure.
- The Senate plans to vote on Biden's nominee to be assistant secretary at the Labor Department and a judicial nominee.

## Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- **Bloomberg Government: Democrats Draw Up Billionaire-Tax Plan:** Democratic lawmakers, with the president's support, are drawing up details of a plan to tax billionaires and other ultra-high U.S. earners after Sen. Kyrsten Sinema's (D-Ariz.) opposition to raising the rate on corporations sank a key funding component for a multitrillion-dollar social-spending package. Senate Finance Chairman Ron Wyden (D-Ore.) plans this week to unveil a new tax on the unrealized capital gains of the ultra-rich, according to his office.
  - The proposal, which has support from other Democrats, would set the so-called billionaires' income tax at \$1 billion in annual income, or three consecutive years of \$100 million or more in income – which would hit some 700 taxpayers.
- **Bloomberg Government: Democrats Set to Scale Back Drug-Price Ambitions:** Democrats working on Biden's big social-spending bill are discussing a proposal to limit the main tool for lowering drug prices to medicines that already face competition, people familiar with the talks said. The White House proposal, viewed as an effort to win over holdout lawmakers including Sinema, would exempt new drugs and many with the biggest price tags.
  - The change would be a major shift away from earlier proposals that focused mostly on drugs that face no competition. Drugs with government-granted exclusivity would be exempt from proposed drug-price negotiation provision, according to the people, who asked not to be identified because the talks are private. The provision is set to be included in the domestic policy package.

- **The Washington Post: Pelosi: Democrats Near Deal On Biden's Build Back Better Plan, Will Vote On Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill This Week:** House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) said Democrats are on the verge of an agreement on a social spending bill and also plan to vote on a separate \$1.2 trillion bipartisan infrastructure bill this week. "I think we're pretty much there now," Pelosi said on CNN's "State of the Union" on Sunday, when asked whether President Biden would "have a deal in hand" on his "Build Back Better" agenda before he travels to Europe later this week. "We're almost there. It's just the language of it."
- **Bloomberg Government: HHS Urged to Soften Medicare Payment Cuts:** Proposed Medicare payment cuts and a new payment model could hurt access to cancer treatment and adversely affect the radiation oncology community, a bipartisan group of lawmakers told the Biden administration last week. Lawmakers called on top Biden officials to avert an estimated \$300 million in cuts contained in the proposed 2022 Medicare physician fee schedule and the proposed radiation oncology payment model.
- **Bloomberg Government: Biotechs Urge Guardrails as Biden Mulls Life-Saving Device Rule:** Biotech startups and trade groups are rallying behind the Biden administration's bid to repeal a rule to speed up Medicare coverage of certain innovative medical devices. The Medicare agency finalized the rule in the last days of the Trump administration to give beneficiaries faster access to devices designated as "breakthrough" by the FDA.
- **KHN: 3 States Limit Nursing Home Profits In Bid To Improve Care:** Nursing homes receive billions of taxpayers' dollars every year to care for chronically ill frail elders, but until now, there was no guarantee that's how the money would be spent. Massachusetts, New Jersey and New York are taking unprecedented steps to ensure they get what they pay for, after the devastating impact of covid-19 exposed problems with staffing and infection control in nursing homes. The states have set requirements for how much nursing homes must spend on residents' direct care and imposed limits on what they can spend elsewhere, including administrative expenses, executive salaries and advertising and even how much they can pocket as profit. Facilities that exceed those limits will have to refund the difference to the state or the state will deduct that amount before paying the bill.